

EVERY OTHER SUNDAY

VOL. XXIV.—No. 8. A PAPER FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AND THE HOME. DECEMBER 20, 1908.



Acts of virtue ripen into habits; and the goodly and permanent result is the formation or establishment of a virtuous character.

CHALMERS.

For Every Other Sunday.

ANOTHER CHRISTMAS.

BY DOROTHY KING.

If we forget, through months and months of toil,
If we forget, through strife or joy or pain,
If we forget to share another's grief,
Then He sends His Christmas
To remind us once again.

If we forget, when roses are in bloom,
If we forget, when comes sweet summer rain,
If we forget the blossoms 'neath the snow,
Then He sends His holly
To remind us once again.

Oh, bright His holly with its berries red,
Oh, sweet His message of "Good will to men,"
Oh, glad those hearts that bear another's load
When He sends His Christmas
To remind us once again.

For Every Other Sunday.

THE COMING OF THE CHRIST-CHILD.

BY MARION E. PICKERING.

ONE sunny day during the last week of November, there were great doings at the home of Lisbeth and Gretchen. The busy mother seemed to be everywhere at once; and Greta, the handy little maid-of-all-work, shuffled nimbly around in her heelless wooden shoes.

The garden fence had been thoroughly scrubbed; and all the feather-beds, with their bright red coverings, were hung over it and beaten and brushed into great downy puff-balls. And, where each member of the family has two all to himself, that was really quite a piece of work to begin with.

Then followed such a beating of rugs and waxing of floors and polishing of furniture and cleaning of windows! Finally through open door and windows floated the spicy odor of cakes and sweetmeats.

It was Thanksgiving week, to be sure; but, if you had happened to mention 1620 and the "Mayflower" and the Pilgrims and the hungry days and the coming of the English ships and Thanksgiving to Greta, her round blue eyes would have become still rounder with surprise. But Greta could have told you all about the battle of Sedan, which most of us would want

a chance to look up before we talked much about it. No doubt she would have become quite excited as she went on to describe the celebration of the great German victory on the 2d of September, when, in her Sunday best, she had followed the long procession of veterans bearing the tattered war-flag, and sung "The Watch on the Rhine" with the enthusiastic crowd. So ignorance is often merely a matter of knowing something different after all.

Now, having no particular reason for being more thankful than usual, Lisbeth's mother was beginning early to make ready for the greatest festival in the whole year,—the coming of the little Christ-child.

In the Girls' School just beyond the old city gate Lisbeth and Gretchen were becoming decidedly restless—and that is saying a great deal for placid little German children. It was so tiresome to study the long declension of a little word like "the" when there was a lovely gold and green motto, "May Peace dwell in our Home," waiting for the very last stitches. It would be such a surprise for mother, and her usually sharp eyes were so blind nowadays!

At the Boys' School in the next street Ludwig and Karl were equally uneasy, but the stern master almost looked their way and they immediately settled to business.

But they were free at last and Ludwig and Karl scampered to the corner, looking like funny little pack-peddlers with their satchels bobbing up and down upon their shoulders. There they met Lisbeth and Gretchen, and all joined hands for the race home.

Just as they expected, there was the great rose platter heaped high with the most delicious cakes. Of course these were not the "surprise cakes," those would be baked during Christmas week. Mother always contrived new shapes and wonderful effects with colored frosting, and no one would have even a peep at them until Christmas Eve.

Day by day the delightful mystery increased until the longed-for holidays came at last and brought the joyful Christmas Eve.

In the early evening, with much laughter and chatter, the children were hustled into a dark room and the door closed. They took Baby Franz with them, for wee Katrina had come to occupy the cradle and add to the Christmas joy. An honored guest, she lay in the "best room," placidly sucking her thumb and watching the preparations with solemn eyes. Huddled together in the dark, the children sang the beautiful Christmas carols over and over. Hark! Father and the mother were singing in reply:

"Oh, come ye little children,
And haste to Bethlehem's stall,
For lo! the little Christ-child
Prepares good gifts for all!"

The doors suddenly swung wide open, and the blaze of light almost blinded the five pairs of eager eyes peering out of the darkness. The little tree was literally covered with ornaments in gold and silver paper,—fringe and lace and festoon and ball,—while tiny candles flared from every twig. Above hovered the same beautiful angel that folded its white wings over the mother's tree when she was a little girl.

Beneath the lower branches was a rude stable with the Baby in the Manger, and Mary and Joseph and the Three Wise Men and the kneeling oxen, wonderfully carved in wood,—while just above hung the shining "Star in the East."

In a row around the tree were little tables, one for each member of the family, whereon were spread the gifts and the Christmas cakes.

But first of all everybody joined hands and sang the song of the Christmas tree:

"O Christmas tree, in summer days
How green your branches grow;
And, when the little Christ-child comes,
You blossom in the snow.
O Christmas-tree, in summer days,
How green your branches grow!"

Then the mother held up both hands in admiration of the wonderful stitches in the green and gold motto, and declared that the only place in the house worthy of such beautiful work was the space above the mirror in the best room. The father at once pulled on the warm knitted wristers which proved to be the one thing he especially needed to make him really comfortable for the winter.

Ludwig and Karl were already upon the floor drilling troops of tin soldiers, while Lisbeth and Gretchen cuddled their sweet-faced baby-dolls and tenderly crooned,

"Rest little heart, rest,"
and
"Sleep, sleep, heart's dearest."

As for Baby Franz—he could only make frantic efforts to grasp all his treasures at once.

During Christmas week the children played with their new toys beneath the glittering tree, living over and over again the joy of Christmas Eve.

But upon New Year's morning the mother carefully folded the beautiful angel and the carved images and the gold and silver ornaments in soft papers and packed them away in the Christmas box. Then came Greta with broom and brush and dust-pan. The best room was restored to its usual spotless order; and the little tree, its life mission accomplished, was carried off to the kitchen to be burned.

"O Christmas-tree, in summer days
How green your branches grow;
And, when the little Christ-child comes,
You blossom in the snow!"

For Every Other Sunday.

THE STRANGE APPLE DUMPLINGS.

BY MARGARET ERSKINE.

THE fire had quite burnt out. The pudding, or what remained of it, had been removed, and Mary came in, bringing two plates with an apple dumpling on each, a tiny flag flying from the top of them.

"Apple dumplings," sighed Mollie, "I just wish I had known it, I wouldn't have eaten two helps of pudding. I's just full up."

"Oh, rubbish," cried Artie, "I've got lots and lots of room left in me, and I had two helps of everything. One never gets really full up on Christmas Day. I can eat a dumpling. You had better get up and shake yourself, you will have lots of room then."

"Yes," sighed Mollie, "haps I better," and she got down off her chair and shook herself gravely. "I's just as full," she said sadly as she climbed back again into it.

"That is a great pity, Mollie," laughed mother, "for I am afraid cook will be very disappointed if you don't eat one of her dumplings. She has just made two of them, one for you and one for Artie. See, she has written your name on the little flag. It says, 'For Mollie.' Won't you try and eat it, Mollie?"

"It's dreful big," sighed Mollie, as her dumpling was put down in front of her; and it certainly was an unusually large apple dumpling, quite as big as the plate it was on.

"Try it, Mollie," suggested mother, "perhaps you won't find it as big as you fancy."

Mollie took up her spoon and cut a piece out of the corner of her dumpling. Then to her sur-

prise the whole crust fell to pieces, and inside it was a dear little tin bath, with a real tap that would turn on, and it would just fit the very smallest doll she had.

"Oh, oh, oh," shrieked Mollie, "what a ducky little bath. What have you got in your dumpling, Artie?"

"A penknife," cried Artie, "a great, big beauty, and it has two blades and a corkscrew, too. But how did they get inside the crust, mother?"

Mother laughed, "You'll have to ask cook."

"Artie, my son," said his father, "do you know, it is my firm belief that those dumplings didn't have any bottoms to them."

DECEMBER.

With whisper and rustle and start and hush,
The dry leaves murmur on tree and bush;
On sombre pines, with boughs bent low,
Forsaken nests are piled with snow.
The chicadees, alert for seeds,
Chatter and cling to the swaying weeds;
The snow drifts deep in the country ways,
And short and cold are the cheerless days.
Yet fair on the brow of the frozen night
The Christmas stars shine, large and bright.

Sara Andrew Shafer, in The Outlook.

For Every Other Sunday.

NEW ENGLAND CHRISTMAS.—1621.

BY SUSAN E. W. JOCELYN.

IT was Christmas Eve on this "stern and rock-bound coast"; and Mistress Wade, crouching by the fire in her humble cot, sang softly to the baby boy cuddled upon her breast, leaning forward from time to time to stir the porridge that awaited the coming of the good man.

Soothed by her own little lullaby, she drowsily settled far down in her rocker, while fancy carried her back to the merry Christmas-tide in old England. The narrow smoky walls of her darkening room gradually spread themselves out, and were lost in a vision of the grandfather's kitchen teeming with good cheer, its blazing yule log, its steaming meats, peacock pies, and the wassail bowl with roasted apples bobbing about on top. Then came the twanging harp, while over the polished floor young men and maidens tripped lightly, till under the swinging mistletoe a little skirmish brought a deeper flush to her cheek, even in dreamland.

So completely was she lost in Christmas cheer that the step of Goodman Wade on the threshold failed to arouse her, and it was not till the words, "Wast dreaming of Christmas at home, Janet?" gently spoken close at her side, brought back a realizing sense of her actual surroundings.

"Ay, ay," she answered with a quick little sob.

"Mayhap I did wrong to bring thee away, dear heart," came his slowly uttered words, and Goodman Wade solemnly eyed the fading embers.

"Nay, John, nay, I meant not that. I am content with thee and little sonny; but why cannot we—we three, have our own little Christmas? Why not start good cheer for the lad? Canst rise betimes and shoot some game before thou goest a-lumbering, and?"

"Ay, ay, that I will," interrupted the good man gleefully. "The governor hath excused us from all work to-morrow, we of the good ship, 'Fortune,'—we of the Church of England."

"Does his honor say that? Long life to him," and the little dame sprang up almost gayly. Then, tucking small John into his cradle with a caressing pat and a gentle kiss

on his soft cheek, she threw a fresh stick on the fire, drew the table nearer to the hearthstone, and served both herself and husband with the steaming porridge, and, while she planned the morrow's cheer, light from the blazing logs brought out the gold glints in her hair and the dimples in her cheeks, making a pleasing picture against the murky background.

Early on the following morning the humble dwelling showed signs of unusual activity, though an air of joyous secrecy prevailed withal. Goodman Wade had suggested that it were not best to draw attention to their plans, so the game, plucked and stuffed with beechnuts, awaited in ambush the hour when they should be hung by stout cords before the fire, to spin and roast themselves to their heart's content.

"Robert Hicks bids me to a game of ball on the town square," called Master Wade from the doorway; and Mistress Wade, busy with her pudding, piped up cheerily, "Go thou, and I will come anon to watch thee. Mayhap 'twill please the little one to see his father for once a-rollicking."

It was well mid-day when the blithe little dame, with young John bundled into his scarlet coat, and a hood of the same glowing cloth tied over her shining hair, trudged down the road to the village green. She sought a place among a few other women and laughing girls gathered to see the fun, giving a nod and smile in answer to her goodman's little wave of recognition, and gayety for a time prevailed.

Excitement in the game was at its height, and the sounds of mirth rose boisterously, when wearily toiling up the hill came the wood-choppers, the first settlers, the Pilgrims, on their way to their scanty noonday meal.

"Look ye there, governor," said one with a grim smile. "Wilt thou allow Christmas revels for some, while others work?" And Governor Bradford, passing forward into the midst of the crowd, now in sudden quietude, said, in clear-cut tones:

"I told you that, if you made the keeping of Christmas Day matter of conscience, I should leave you alone until you were better informed. Now, however, I warn you that it goeth against my conscience as governor of this colony to let idle men play while others work, and if, indeed, you find matter of devotion in the day, ye shall keep it quietly and soberly in your houses. There shall be neither revelling nor gaming in the streets, and that I promise you. Let whosoever owneth these toys take them away and store them out of sight; and remember, men, that the apostle saith, 'If a man will not work, neither shall he eat.'"

These temperate but decisive words left no man in doubt of his obligation, and with sober faces they gathered up their bats and balls to disband, when little Mistress Wade, with indignant mien and blazing cheeks, stepped close to her husband's side, whispering, "Rest easy, John, the roasts shall wait, and the yule log burns long."

A coaxing smile was on her lips, though a dangerous little spark gleamed in her eye; but it softened to a look of pity when the governor, in passing, glanced kindly at little John, and lingered a moment to softly pat his cheek, saying as he did so: "It is a fine babe. We shall have need of him anon in the colony."

Then, as she watched his tall form moving down the road, she said softly: "Poor man, he looks sadly spent. Mayhap it is his own broken family that giveth him such a frown—his little lad across the sea, and his wife beneath it. Dear, dear!" and, gathering the boy closer in her arms she hastened homeward.

Fumes of roasted game mingled with pungent scent of hemlock boughs burst in one great wave

of delicious odor through the open door, as Goodman Wade lifted the latch at nightfall, and a vision of Christmas cheer met his eye.

The little table bedecked with greens, its Christmas candle (a tallow-dip mounted on a tall wooden block wound with pine), held also the steaming game, decorated with bright berries, and the blazing pudding stuffed with native plums, while at its head sat the mistress in her scarlet petticoat and white kerchief, with rollicking little John at her side awaiting his coming.

"Merry Christmas! merry Christmas!" cried he, clasping them both in one embrace. "Hurrah, and God save the King!"

"Peace on earth, good will to men!" Long live Governor Bradford," came in gentle tones. Then a deep Amen fell like a blessing on the feast.

Earnestness is the salt of eloquence.

VICTOR HUGO.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

By a beautiful road our Christmas comes,

A road full twelve months long;

And every mile is as warm as a smile,

And every hour is a song.

* * * * *

To the beautiful home our Christmas comes,

The home that is safe and sweet,

With its door ajar for the beam of the Star,

And its corner for love's retreat.

There the mark on the wall for the golden head

Is higher a bit; for, lo!

Between Christmas coming and Christmas sped

There's time for the bairn to grow.

* * * * *

'Tis a beautiful task our Christmas brings

For old and young to share,

With jingle of bells and silvery swells

Of music in the air.

To make the sad world merry awhile,

And to frighten sin away,

And to bless us all, whatever befall,

Is the task of Christmas Day.

MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

For Every Other Sunday.

THE BEARS' CHRISTMAS PARTY.

(Sequel to "The Bears' Christmas Surprise.")

BY BERTHA LOUISE BOYD.

IT was Christmas Eve. All the woolly bears were busy, the big ones and the little ones, the black ones and the white ones, the buff, brown, gray and cinnamon color ones, because they were all getting ready to go to a party. It was to be held in the very same toy store where they all had their frolic before, and a little toy bird told them it was to be a grand affair.

"I wonder how I will look when I take my hair out of curl papers," thought Velvet Foot, putting her paw up to her forehead, and looking very wise. "My little mistress always wears them before she goes to a party, so I thought I must, too."

"I hope this red ribbon is becoming," said Billy Button, as he tied it under his chin into a big bow.

"It may be slushy on the way, so I think I'll lay out rubbers to wear," said Steel Coat, picking up a pair of doll's rubbers, which looked as though they might not fit very well.

After a while all the bears were ready, and off they started for the party. Among the first to arrive was a white one with a pink nose,

called Peaches-and-Cream. Bobs, a brown one, carried a pink parasol over her, all the way, because she was afraid the moonlight might fade the pink ribbon tied under her left ear, which she always wore to match her nose as nearly as possible.

Just as they entered the toy store, looking very dignified, a Jack-in-the-Box jumped out from behind the door, calling, "Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas!" and then the ice was broken, and everybody else shouted "Merry Christmas!" and the fun began.

Silver Slipper came in a doll's baby carriage a little later, saying, as she stepped out, "Really, I have been about so much in a carriage, it has become quite too much trouble to walk." But pretty soon she forgot all about that, when she saw what a good time all the rest were having, and began to waltz round and round, waving one paw in the air and then the other, gliding in and out among them, just as well as she ever did.

Finally, Billy Button, who was master of ceremonies, called, "Take partners for the grand march!"

As he spoke, the door of a large show case opened, and out stepped a number of the most attractive dolls the woolly bears had ever seen. Just as soon as they were all introduced, they began to choose partners. Steel Coat invited Miss Amy Amiable to march with him. He admired her modest manner and her long golden hair, which was neatly braided. Carrots, the cinnamon-colored bear, chose a little black-haired doll, whose name was Rose Wright, while a brave-looking Sailor Boy doll invited Peaches-and-Cream. But he found her a little tiresome; for she depended too much on her good looks, and did not try hard enough to make herself agreeable.

Gray Top invited a little Red Riding Hood doll, and Billy Button took out Polly Patience. Her intimate friend, Joy Brighteyes, was chosen by Colonel, a very straight woolly bear, who carried himself as though he might be at the head of a regiment.

When everybody was ready, the tiny Christmas bells, hanging above their heads, all rang the most lovely music, and such a merry time as there was!

Just before it was time for the party to be over, Billy Button spoke once more, asking the attention of all the woolly bears. They were all very fond of Billy, because he was always doing something to be kind, and so they listened eagerly.

"My dear friends," said Billy, "we must now decide whether we will go back to the children and try our best to make them happy again, or whether we will not. What is your wish?"

Then Bobs stepped before them and said, "I am sure we would all rather go back to the children."

"If that is the case," said Billy, "will all those who agree kindly raise their right paw?" And the right paw of every bear present was raised.

"I would like to suggest something," continued Billy, the green bow under his chin becoming very crooked the more interested he grew. "Let us invite these beautiful dolls to join us in making the children happier than ever before. We all know that every little girl has a place in her heart which a doll fills, no matter what else she has."

"Do take us!" pleaded the dolls. And so it was agreed.

While the dolls went for their coats and hats, the woolly bears got some toy automobiles ready, so everybody had a fine automobile ride; and the next day it was a Merry Christmas, indeed, for the children and their toys, too.

For Every Other Sunday.

PANSY'S STORY.

BY MARION STUART WONSON.

"TELL me a story please, Lou."

"I'll tell you a story 'bout Jackamajory
And now my story's begun;
I'll tell you another about his brother,
And now my story is done."

sang a teasing voice that didn't belong to Lou, but to Brother Ben, who had just come in.

"I think you're"—began Pansy, but she didn't have time to say "horrid," for Brother Ben picked her up and set her on his knee, so she finished "good" instead.

"A story, is it? And what is my story to be about?"

"A boy, a girl, and an animal," stated Pansy, who knew what she wanted, which is more than do some little girls who beg for stories.

Brother Ben wrinkled his brows thoughtfully. "Here goes," he cried at last, "Once—" and that was the signal for Pansy's cuddling herself comfortably against the strong arms that held her.

"Once there was a little girl just as old as you are, and she wanted a rabbit dreadfully. She had a dear little kitten named Bundle, three little yellow chickens all her own, and a half share in a puppy dog; but, dear me, how she did want a little, soft, shy, loving rabbit! At last one day the little girl's mother came home with a big flour bag in her hands, and, when the little girl peeped in to see what made the queer flopping, she found two dear little rabbits, the larger one dark, and the smaller pure white. 'One is for you,' said her mother 'and one is for brother.'

"Then mine's the white," cried the little girl, 'and it's littler than its brother, just as I'm littler than Ben.'

"How she did love those rabbits, first hers of course, and second the other one. Ben loved them, too, only he was a boy, and had a rougher way of showing it.

"I wonder what we'll feed them with," said L—, 'I mean the little girl.'

"Fresh leaves," said mamma, 'lettuce and things like that.'

"I know," cried Ben, 'a fellow at school told me dandelion stems were great for them.'

"So the children picked dandelion stems for pretty nearly an hour, until there were about ten times as many as two bunnies could eat. But the rabbits huddled in a corner and wouldn't even try the dandelion stems. The little girl got down on her knees and coaxed and coaxed, but they only looked at her out of the corners of their eyes, and would not stir.

"I know what," said Ben, 'they haven't fresh air enough in that coop. I'm going to let 'em out.'

"O Ben, mamma said you mustn't."

"Pooh!" said Ben, 'she didn't mean just out here with us. She meant let 'em out to stay.' But little sister wasn't convinced, and pleaded with him not to.

"Girls are always 'fraid cats,' said Ben, and he opened the slat. Whisk! went the little white rabbit.

Neither of the children saw Tiger, the kitty, walking majestically through the yard; but Tiger was quicker than they, and saw rabbit. He didn't walk majestically any longer: he gave a leap and a pounce, and landed on top of the little white rabbit. How the children screamed! But mamma was way up in the attic and didn't hear them until



VICTORIA'S CHRISTMAS PRAYER.

(See Story on page 62.)

the little white rabbit was limp and still. Little sister wouldn't look at Ben, though his rabbit had run too, and was hidden in the wood-pile. 'I don't care anything about the gray rabbit,' she said, 'I just loved mine.'

"Pansy, child, you wouldn't believe how sorry the little boy was. He was a heedless little boy, but he had a conscience and it pricked terribly when he saw his sister's tears. 'You can have my gray one,' he said, 'and my kitty and all my jack-straws, and even the gold piece Aunt Abbie gave me.'

"Mamma smiled sadly at him. 'I think sister must have something else,' she said. Then Ben remembered something his father had told him the last time he forgot and disobeyed. 'You'll have to set your own punishment,' he said, 'but it must be something hard.'

"I don't believe even the gold piece will

do,' said mamma. 'Think again, sonnie.' So sonnie thought—thought until his lips quivered and the great tears came.

"Sister shall go to the circus with papa," he said, 'stead of me,' and then he ran upstairs and sobbed and sobbed and sobbed until it seemed as if he had cried every tear he ever could. For the little boy had never been to a circus, and he wanted to go to this one more than anything else he had ever wanted in his life."

"Oh, dear," said Pansy, as Brother Ben paused, "I'm dreadfully sorry for both those poor chillens. Did the gray rabbit ever come back, and did the little girl like the circus?"

"Yes, to both questions," smiled Brother Ben. "Now you've had your story, Pansy pet, and Brother Ben must go out to the barn," and he swung Pansy off his knee.



DICKENS' HOME AT GADSHILL, ENGLAND.

For Every Other Sunday.

CHARLES DICKENS.

BY LUCRETIA MACY GARDNER.

THE words "Merry Christmas," with their suggestion of glad tidings and joyful carols, seem to belong to Charles Dickens; for he was surely the lover of children, the fun-maker, and the cheery friend of all humanity. He makes a most appropriate subject at this holiday time.

We read that he was born at Landport in Portsea, England, on Friday, the 7th of February, 1812, thus making him an Englishman by birth, but because of his great heart belonging to all the world.

"The queer small boy," as Dickens calls himself in the story of "David Copperfield," was a very tiny and sickly chap, who was not particularly fond of playing cricket, marbles, or prisoner's base, but enjoyed watching the other boys, and often spent his recess reading some book.

His father, John Dickens, was very poor, and found it difficult to pay the bills of his large family, but was so much like Micawber in his "waiting for things to turn up," and expecting they would, that it is easy to see where his son found the original of the character.

Dickens, although only two year old when he left Portsea for Chatham, could remember the small front garden, and being carried to watch the soldiers drill. It was at Chatham, too, when he passed the house on the hill, called the "Gadshill Place," which he loved to look at,

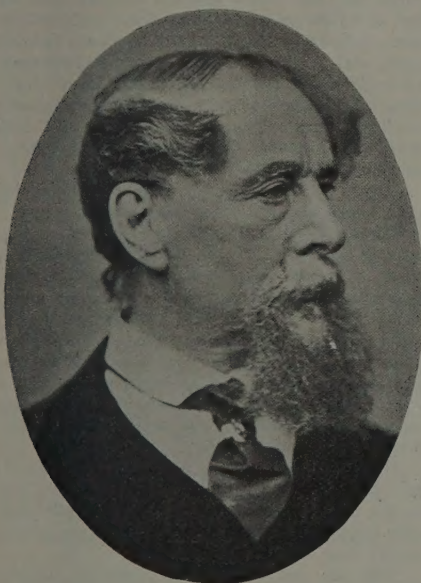
and which his father assured him he might own some day if he only worked hard enough,—words that came true in after years.

Like so many famous men, Dickens received his first instruction from his mother, who taught him early lessons in English and later Latin. He said of his mother's teaching, "I faintly remember her teaching me the alphabet; and, when I look upon the fat black letters in the primer, the puzzling novelty of their shapes, and the easy good nature of O and S, always seem to present themselves as they used to do."

When Charles was eleven years old, and living in London, he was put into a shoe-blackening factory, where he pasted labels on bottles, earning only six shillings a week, and often going to bed hungry. After his father was released from Marshalsea Prison, where he had been placed for debt, a quarrel with his son's employer actually decided him to send Charles to school, and he entered Wellington House Academy, kept by a Mr. Jones.

One of the boy's schoolmates said of him: "He usually held his head more erect than lads ordinarily do, and there was a general smartness about him. His week-day dress of jacket and trousers, I can clearly remember, was what is called pepper-and-salt; and, instead of the frill that most boys of his age wore then, he had a turn-down collar." Dickens' father, when asked where Charles was educated, answered, "Why, indeed, sir, ha! ha! he may be said to have educated himself."

With such a mind as that of Dickens we cannot say that his boyhood was spent in ignorance.



CHARLES DICKENS.

Knowledge is like money,—the more a man gets, the more he craves.

H. W. SHAW.

He not only knew London streets, but was a part of them, storing up in his wonderful brain facts from every-day life. His hero was often the ordinary man of the street; his heroine, uncouth, possibly deformed and homely, but who, like Dickens, has made us laugh and cry over just these specimens of humanity?

In spite of a friend's warning as to the difficulties of short-hand, Dickens was determined to conquer it. Like David in "David Copperfield," Charles had his Dora, affection for whom acted at this time as a great stimulus, although he did not marry her, but chose quite a different person, Catherine Hogarth. With the persistence and fidelity that he showed in everything that he undertook, he taught himself, and became one of the most rapid reporters in London. He had to take down public speeches in which he must make no mistakes. He told of writing on the palm of his hand by the light of a dark lantern, in a post-chaise and four, galloping through a wild country. "I have been upset," he said, "in almost every description of vehicle known in this country"; but he always reached the office in time for his articles to be published, and to receive compliments from Mr. Black, the editor of the *Chronicle*.

Dickens became a reporter for the *Morning Chronicle* when he was twenty-three, and his first piece of writing was published in the *Old Monthly Magazine* in December, 1833, called "A Dinner at Poplar Walk." The next summer he wrote a sketch and signed it "Boz." He used to call his youngest brother Augustus, in honor of the Vicar of Wakefield, Moses, which, if pronounced through the nose, sounded like Boses, and was shortened into Boz. George Cruikshank made some clever illustrations for these shorter sketches, and ably carried out the author's ideas in his novels.

"Pickwick Papers" soon appeared, rapidly followed by "Oliver Twist," "Nicholas Nickleby," and others. His books were published in such close succession that a friend said of him, "He is a great man, unless he is a thousand men." Before he was thirty he was famous, and the names of Little Nell, Sam Weller, Fagin, Mr. Pickwick, Little Em'ly, Paul Dombey, and countless others, were household words.

Washington Irving wrote Dickens a most hearty letter when he read "Old Curiosity Shop." The author of easy-going, lovable "Rip van Winkle" longed to clasp the hand of Dickens, and in the first of the year, 1841, Mr. and Mrs. Dickens sailed for America. The letters which Dickens sent to England showed a natural homesick feeling for his children who were left in the care of an actor friend. He was not in love with our country, but on a later visit learned to appreciate its good side.

The Italian letters and sketches that he sent from foreign lands were enthusiastic, and proved more entertaining than his views upon America. He had, indeed, earned a rest and change of scene; for his charming "Christmas Carol" had just been published, and sent forth to an appreciative world. The book was the first of a series of Christmas stories, the next of which was "The Chimes," and the last, "The Cricket on the Hearth."

After the "Christmas Carol" was published letters from complete strangers came to Dickens. The humble poor, as well as the rich, read and took to heart its lessons. It taught the selfish to be less selfish, the unjust to try and be more generous, and, most important of all, a spirit of devotion to every-day duties without which the outward observance of Christmas was useless.

Dickens had a host of friends among literary people such as, Carlyle, Irving, Mrs. Gaskell,

Thackeray, and his best life-long adviser and friend, John Forster, with whom he walked and took long gallops across his English country.

Perhaps we are apt to think of him as bald and elderly, but in his younger days he was most pleasing. His eyes fairly danced with humor, and, when he talked, every feature was alert. At that time his hair was a rich brown, his face clean shaven, and he remained to the last youthful in manner, energetic, and interested in all things about him.

He returned to America just before Thanksgiving in 1867, and gave to all who heard him read from his own works an experience never to be forgotten. His audiences were large, and the price of admission in proportion, but the effort was too much for his strength. When he returned to England and attempted to give readings, the doctors finally forbade it. He bought the house at Gadshill which he had admired when a boy, and there began his last work, "Edwin Drood."

On the 8th of June, 1870, he worked all day upon the story, but at dinner time had an ill turn, and never regained consciousness. The tender, brave heart that had felt the sorrows of the tiniest waif in London streets ceased to beat on the evening of Thursday, the 9th of June.

The following request was written in his will: "I direct that I be buried in an inexpensive, unostentatious, and strictly private manner; that at the utmost not more than three mourning coaches be employed. I direct that my name be inscribed in plain English letters on my tomb, without the addition of 'Mr.' or 'Esquire.' I conjure my friends on no account to make me the subject of any monument, memorial, or testimonial whatever. I rest my claims to the remembrance of my country upon my published works, and to the remembrance of my friends upon their experience of me in addition thereto. I commit my soul to the mercy of God through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and I exhort my dear children humbly to try to guide themselves by the teachings of the New Testament."

After a simple service Dickens was laid in Westminster Abbey, where mourners came in such crowds that Dean Stanley said, "There was a constant pressure to the spot, and many flowers were strewn upon his grave by unknown hands, and many tears were shed from unknown eyes."

In the words of Tiny Tim, one of his most touching characters, we not only say at this Christmas season, "God bless us, every one," but "God bless the brave-hearted lover of good cheer, Charles Dickens."

THE HOME LIGHT.

THE light of home's a wondrous light,
So tender is its shining,
So soft it follows through the night,
Our weary road outlining.
Though lonely and for years we roam,
Far from the ones who love us,
Yet ever shines the light of home,
Like God's grace spread above us.

The light of home's a wondrous light;
Through life it follows, seeming,
Yet when with age the hair is white,
Clear in the front 'tis gleaming.
It shines from where our loved ones are,
Oh, this is Love's divining!
And through the gates of heaven ajar
At last we see it shining.

Christian Life.

For Every Other Sunday.

VICTORIA'S CHRISTMAS PRAYER.

BY ELIZABETH L. STOCKING.

"ALL my dollies are brokded or dead!" said Victoria, almost crying. "Mamma, do you think, if I asked God, he would send me a new one for Christmas?"

"I think very likely He would, dear," replied mamma.

When Victoria said her prayers that night, after she had finished "Now I lay me" and "God bless everybody," she added, "O God, won't you please send me a new dolly for Christmas; and please, God, I would like a baby dolly with long clothes."

Then Victoria's mamma tucked her up in bed and kissed her, and Victoria went to sleep, and dreamed that a beautiful angel came flying from heaven, and gave her a lovely doll. When she woke the next morning, she almost expected to see a dolly beside her on the pillow; but she remembered she had asked for a doll at Christmas, and it was a whole week to Christmas.

"What shall I do, mamma? It is such a long time to wait," asked Victoria.

"Suppose you make Christmas presents, dear," suggested mamma. "How would you like to sew some dear little bright-colored pin-balls?"

"Oh, that would be vewy splendid!" cried Victoria, clapping her hands.

Mamma got some bits of gay silk and pieces of card-board, and cut and basted together little round pin-balls, while Victoria sewed them around the edge. When they were done, Victoria stuck pins in them, and sewed on pieces of narrow ribbon by which to hang them up. They were very pretty and bright. She made them for everybody, and was happy while she worked, as little girls are apt to be when they are doing nice things for other people.

Christmas Eve came at last. All day long the door into the parlor had been shut, and Victoria could only wonder—wonder—The aunts and the uncles and the cousins came to tea, but Victoria was so excited she could hardly eat. After supper the parlor door was thrown open, and there stood the beautiful Christmas-tree, glowing with candles, bright with lovely things, and fragrant with the fir, Christmassy smell we all love so much. It looked as if it had come straight from fairyland or Santa Clausland, of some other delightful country.

"Oh!" cried Victoria, and "Oh!" again, with the long sigh, "isn't it beautiful!"

The aunts and the uncles and the cousins sat around the room in a circle, and Victoria was close to mamma in her little chair. Grandpa gave out the presents, while every one cried, "Oh!" and "Ah!" and "How perfectly lovely!"

Victoria's pin-balls hung from the branches of the tree, like so many bright-colored apples; and grandpa picked and passed them around to all the people, who were very much pleased, indeed, that Victoria had made such pretty presents for them.

"Here's something for Victoria," said grandpa, "from Santa Claus," and he placed in Victoria's arm the sweetest little baby dolly you ever saw, with soft, curly hair, blue eyes, and a dainty long white dress.

"Oh, oh, oh!" exclaimed Victoria, as she joyfully hugged the beautiful dolly to her breast. "I thought she'd come!"

"Well, bless my soul, here's another one!" said grandpa. "This is from mamma."

Sure enough, it was another baby dolly, just as sweet and pretty as the first one.

"They're twins!" cried Victoria, as she made room for the other dolly.

But grandpa was pulling something else out from under the tree—a great big cloth doll, the kind one loves, because they are so soft and “cuddly” and don’t get broken.

“Here’s another doll,” he said.

“Why, who can that be for?” inquired Victoria.

“It says ‘Victoria’ on it,” explained grandpa. “Jimminy Gee!” exclaimed Victoria.

Grandma looked shocked, but Uncle Ned laughed.

“I think I can hold her too,” said Victoria, stretching out her arms for the new baby.

“And here’s a little dolly that looks as if he came straight from the North Pole,” said grandpa. “He’s an Esquimaux. And who do you s’pose he’s for?”

“Me,” said Victoria. She was becoming used to getting dolls by this time.

“Wonder if there’re any more,” said grandpa. “Yes, sir, here’s one hanging on the tree,” as he detached a tiny doll in a red-knitted dress. “This one came all the way from Aunt Alice in New York. And it’s for—Victoria!”

“You’ll have enough to start an orphan asylum,” laughed Uncle Ned.

“Well, I guess that’s all,” said grandpa, “Hello, here’s a box under the tree that says ‘Victoria’ on it. You better open it yourself, girlie.”

Victoria carefully laid her dollies down on the sofa, and lifted the cover from the box.

“Oh, it’s a doll!” she cried, “a beautiful, beautiful doll!” And so it was,—the most lovely lady doll, with golden hair and blue eyes that opened and shut, and three complete sets of costumes. She had a blue dress with sweet little blue shoes and stockings, a pink dress with pink shoes and stockings, and a white dress with white shoes and stockings.

“She’s such a stylish doll!” said Victoria.

After all the presents had been taken from the tree, and every one had admired and enjoyed until they were tired, Victoria sat in her little rocking-chair with her dollies in her arms. You could hardly see her at all, she was so covered up with dolls.

“Mamma,” she said seriously, “this is my family that God has given me. I asked for one doll, and He gave me six.”

“But your dolls were from mamma and aunt and lots of different people,” objected Uncle Ned.

“Oh, yes,” replied Victoria, nodding wisely, “but it was God who made all those people want to give me dollies.”

For Every Other Sunday.

THE SNOW DOLLS.

BY LAURA FROST ARMITAGE.

WINIFRED was “out of sorts.” She did not want to read her story-books nor build houses with her blocks. She was tired of playing with her dolls. She wanted something new to play with, although she had a great many playthings.

“O mamma,” she said, “I wish I had a sister, and then I would have somebody to play with. Edith has gone away and Maud has company. I’ve played with Frisk, but he is only a cat and can’t talk.”

Mamma looked at the frowning face a moment, then laid aside her sewing and said: “We will go for a sleigh-ride, Winifred. Go and tell James to harness.”

It was a cold, clear day late in December. The snow had covered the ground for more than a week, and the roads were smooth and hard. As they sped along behind the swift horses, Winifred soon began to look like herself

again. The frown disappeared from her face and gave place to smiles.

In about an hour they were out of the busy town and on the country roads. As they drove by a small house, they saw two little girls playing near it in the path leading to the door. They were playing with dolls, and one was just laying hers down on a bed while the other had placed hers in a chair. But such a queer bed and queer chair! They were both made of snow.

“Oh, please stop, James,” cried Winifred, and the horses quickly stopped. Then Winifred saw the dolls. Why, the dolls, too, were made of snow, with eyes, nose, and mouth of sticks; and they were dressed in clothes which the children had probably made. Then there was a snow table, with dishes of snow. The little girls did not wear thick coats and furs, as Winifred did. Their coats were thin, but they looked warm and had rosy cheeks.

“Oh, please may I come and look at your dolls?” called Winifred.

“Yes,” they answered.

Out she jumped. “Oh, how nice!” she said. “May I hold one of the dolls? I never had a snow doll.”

“Didn’t you?” said the older girl. “This is the only kind we ever had.”

Winifred looked at her in surprise. “But you can’t take them into the house,” she said.

“No, but we put them in their beds here and they stay all night. One night my sister took hers to bed with her when nobody knew it, and in the morning it had melted. We had snow dolls all last winter, for there was a lot of snow. When one doll melts, we make another.”

“Oh, I wish I could stay and play here a little while,” said Winifred. “May I, mamma?”

“Yes,” said mamma, “you may stay a little while. We will drive on and come back in a little while.”

Winifred wanted a doll of her own, and the others showed her how to make it. She pinned her handkerchief about it for a dress and called it a baby doll. Then they made more snow seats and put their dolls up to the table for a supper, with tiny snow balls for food. They were having a lovely time when they heard the sound of bells and mamma called Winifred to come.

“We have had such a fine time,” Winifred said, looking up with cheeks as rosy as the other girls. “Must I go now?”

“Yes,” replied mamma, “you have played in the snow long enough.”

So they said “Good-bye” to the two girls and drove away, Winifred holding her doll and waving her hand until they were out of sight.

“Just think, mamma!” she said. “They never had any dolls but snow dolls, and I have ten. I think they must be very poor.”

“I suppose they are,” said mamma. “They probably would be very glad to have some real dolls.”

Winifred was silent most of the way home, for she was thinking about the girls who had no real dolls.

The next day it rained hard, and by night the snow was nearly gone. Winifred thought of the snow dolls and furniture. What would the two girls do? She was so sorry for them.

When she was going to bed, she said, “O mamma, I am so sorry for those girls. May I give them two of my dolls?”

Her mamma said: “Yes, if you like. Why not send them for Christmas, as it is almost here?”

“Just the thing!” exclaimed Winifred, clapping her hands in delight. So the next day she dressed two of her dolls in their prettiest

clothes, and put them, with more dresses, in a box.

Early Christmas morning James drove out into the country with a package done up in white paper and tied with a red ribbon. He stopped in front of the little house. Two little faces were pressed against the frosty window and two pairs of eyes grew big as the children heard him say, “A Christmas box for the little girls.”

You can imagine their delight when they opened the box. They jumped up and down with joy. On each doll was tied a card on which was written:

“A house doll
and
A Merry Christmas
from Winifred.”

CHRISTMAS ONCE IS CHRISTMAS STILL.

The silent skies are full of speech,

For those with ears to hear;
The winds are whispering each to each;
The moon is calling to the beach;
And stars their sacred wisdom teach
Of Faith and Love and Fear.

And Christmas once is Christmas still;
The gates through which he came,
And forests wild, and murmuring rill,
And fruitful field, and breezy hill,
And all that else the wide world fill,
Are vocal with his name.

Shall we not listen while they sing

This latest Christmas morn,
And music hear in everything,
And faithful lives in tribute bring,
To the great song which greets the King
Who comes when Christ is born?

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

OUR times of greatest pleasure are when we have won some higher peak of difficulty, trodden under foot some evil, and felt, day by day, so sure a growth of moral strength within us that we cannot conceive of an end of growth.

STOPFORD A. BROOKE.

Exercise is the chief source of improvement in all our faculties.

BLAIR.

THE MISTLETOE BOUGH.

NO one needs to be told what the mistletoe is, for is it not used with holly and other evergreens to decorate innumerable rooms at Christmas? It is generally supposed to grow upon the oak, but, though it is found upon that tree, it is much more common upon the apple and other trees. In its universal use at Christmas we must trace a relic of distant days. The Druids, as the priests of the Celtic folk were called, held the oak in great reverence, and performed their sacred ceremonies in oak groves; indeed, their very name is derived from the Celtic word *derw*, meaning “oak.” For mistletoe that grew on the oak, therefore, the Druids had a high regard. They called it in their language “all-heal,” and esteemed it of such value that when found it was cut with a golden knife by a priest clad in a white robe, two white bulls being offered up in sacrifice in honor of the occasion. The fashion of kissing under the mistletoe at Christmas is merely a modern survival of the ancient respect for the evergreen bough with its berries of white.

EDITOR'S CHAIR.

WE offer a portrait of Charles Dickens and a picture of his home where he died, Gadshill Place. Somehow we associate him with the joy and good will of Christmas, not simply by particular passages referring to Christmas, but because of his great heart and wide sympathy with suffering mankind. We take in this connection an extract from "A Christmas Tree," in which the author imagines as follows, according to the story:

"But hark! The Waits are playing, and they break my childish sleep! What images do I associate with the Christmas music as I see them set forth on the Christmas tree! Known before all others, keeping far apart from all the others, they gather around my little bed. An angel, speaking to a group of shepherds in a field; some travellers, with eyes uplifted, following a star; a baby in a manger; a child in a spacious temple, talking with grave men; a solemn figure, with a mild and beautiful face, raising a dead girl by the hand; again, near a city gate, calling back the son of a widow, on his bier, to life; a crowd of people looking through the opened roof of a chamber where he sits, and letting down a sick person on a bed, with ropes; the same in a tempest, walking on the water to a ship; again, on the seashore, teaching a great multitude; again, with a child upon his knee, and other children round; again, restoring sight to the blind, speech to the dumb, hearing to the deaf, health to the sick, strength to the lame, knowledge to the ignorant; again, dying upon a cross, watched by armed soldiers, a thick darkness coming on, the earth beginning to shake, and only one voice heard, 'Forgive them, for they know not what they do!'"

It will interest our young readers specially to know that the story of the girl with so many dolls is a true one, and this picture is taken from life. It must have been a time when teddy bears had not come in to compete with the old fashion of dolls. It will be noticed that the dolls have various colors, and the Editor will warrant that the old ragged black one is a favorite, or was till bruised by hard knocks. Little girls are apt to like best those armless dolls that have been banged and battered, though for great occasions we find that the lady from Paris is brought forward.

In every Christmas number of *Every Other Sunday* we try to give some classic picture such as a Madonna or the scene in Bethlehem. This time we use W. A. Bougereau's well-known "Adoration of the Shepherds." To those accustomed to such representations of art the full beauty soon appears. It may come slower to our younger readers, but we ask them to study the faces and the arrangement of the figures. Of course, we lose in an engraving the warmth, fine detail, and artistic work which belong to a notable painting.

We have given nearly all of our space to Christmas prose and poetry. We welcome you all into the pleasant pathways of reading offered by our contributors, wherein you will find gifts of profit and pleasure. Everything is arrayed in the cheery light of Christmas.

The next number of *Every Other Sunday* falls on a date just after the first of the year, so we add to our salutation of "Merry Christmas," the companion one of "A Happy New Year." This message of friendly greeting we send on the wings of good will to all our readers wherever they may be. Added thereto is our idea of perpetual Christmas:

Of this saying you will hear:
"Christmas comes but once a year."
For myself this is not true,
And I'm sure 'tis so for you.
Every day can Christmas sing
Friendship's song, and good will bring.
With my greeting, then, I say,
"Here's to Christmas every day!"

A SPARK FROM THE YULE LOG.

WHEN the Yule log burns upon the hearth,
With carol, chime, and Christmas cheer,
A fire should kindle in each soul
To gladden all the coming year;
A flame to brighten heart and home,
And shine as well for other eyes,
Fed by good deeds which still glow on,
When dim and cold the Yule log lies.

No life so poor but it may know
A spark of this divinest fire;
No life so beautiful and rich
But still, flame-like, it may aspire.
Then kindle Yule logs far and wide,
To burn on every happy hearth,
Fit symbols of the faith and love
That purify and bless the earth.

LOUISA M. ALCOTT.

BETTER CASTLES THAN CAVERNS.

I FIND the gayest castles in the air that were
ever piled far better for comfort and for
use than the dungeons in the air that are
daily dug and caverned out by grumbling, dis-
contented people.

EMERSON.

LETTER-BOX.

NEW ORLEANS, LA.

Dear Editor,—I live very far away from Boston, but I am a good Unitarian. I like the *Every Other Sunday* very much, and I send you an enigma which I hope you will publish sometime.

Yours truly,

ELIZABETH KATHERINE GREGORY.
(Nine years old.)

ENIGMA X.

I am composed of 10 letters.
My 6, 2, 8, 1, is not stout.
My 4, 9, 7, is a unit.
My 10, 6, 4, 3, is generally sure.
My 10, 1, 4, 5, 2, is not pleasant at night.
My 9, 4, 3, is at present.
My 10, 1, 7, 2, 5, is to speak with contempt.
My 5, 2, 8, 6, is genuine.
My whole is a large city in the United States.

ELIZABETH K. GREGORY.

ENIGMA XI.

I AM composed of 12 letters.
My 8, 10, 9, is a head-dress.
My 1, 2, 3, 4, is what most people make before they die.
My 7, 5, 4, 3, is a place where cloth is made.
My 9, 6, 11, 12, was a candidate.
My whole is a well-known man.

ERNEST L. THAYER.

ANAGRAMS—BOYS' NAMES.

THERE are no looms at work in the mill.
He looks gay in scarf of blue.
There's the doctor. Is any one ill?
Plant cedars and larches, too.

This rain and mud end all our play
Those stones will lame us. We
Must widen all the paths to-day.
Do you know this trick, pa? See!

He can add VI and V and II,
Though he's in the lowest grade.
We're rid, Arch, knave, at last of you,
Lo, chains make you afraid.

Heard the din? Yes, when it rose
In tin can tones.
I am sober, I suppose;
I can drag line for those.

When 'twas tender held
How he fussed and flared!
"No longer an umpire!" now he yelled.
Oh, no, we none of us cared.

CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

My first is in cherry, but not in wheat.
My second is in honey, but not in sweet.
My third is in rhubarb, but not in sage.
My fourth is in youngster, but not in age.
My fifth is in sunshine, but not in rain.
My sixth is in artifice, but not in feign.
My seventh is in needle, but not in thread.
My eighth is in biscuit, but not in bread.
My ninth is in hasten, but not in wait.
My tenth is in canter, but not in gait.
My eleventh is in dumpling, but not in rice.
My twelfth is in nutmeg, but not in spice.
My thirteenth is in mortar, but not in wall.
My whole is the choicest flower of the fall.

E. D. S.

SQUARE WORD.

1. A DOMESTIC animal.
2. A unit.
3. Not dry.

J. ALMUS PRATT.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 5.

ENIGMA VII.—Whither midst falling dew.
ENIGMA VIII.—Independence Day.
SQUARE WORD.—S E A T
E A C H
A C H E
T H E M

NAME END PUZZLE.—Abram, Austin, Bruno, Duncan, Jacob.

BURIED CITIES.—New Haven, Taunton, Buffalo, Dover, Frankfort.

We acknowledge the receipt of letters, puzzles, or answers from Ernest L. Thayer, Uxbridge, Mass.; May E. Fenton, Andover, N.H.; Philip B. Parsons, Melrose, Mass.; Elizabeth Katherine Gregory, New Orleans, La.; Doris M. Cochran, Houlton, Me.; Miss A. J. H. Clarke, Montreal, Canada.

One of those mentioned above writes, "I get the *Every Other Sunday* at my Sunday School, and enjoy it very much." Another one who has sent us an enigma will see it in print in the next issue of our paper.

EVERY OTHER SUNDAY.

REV. EDWARD A. HORTON, EDITOR.

(A BI-WEEKLY.)

The uniform subscription price of *EVERY OTHER SUNDAY* is forty cents a year; but subscribers residing in the Boston postal district and in Canada must send twenty cents additional for postage. All members of Sunday Schools who subscribe for the paper will receive their copies in the package sent to their schools. Twenty-two numbers constitute a volume. Publication is suspended in July and August.

Entered as second-class mail matter, Boston.

PUBLISHED BY THE

UNITARIAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL SOCIETY,
25 BEACON STREET, BOSTON, MASS.

GEO. H. ELLIS CO., PRINTERS, BOSTON